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although not searching, present some indication of the point of view occupied by the street railway owner toward the public. Street railway securities are of general demand only since the eighties. The consolidation of street car lines brought the securities before the public as good investments. As late as the seventies the banks had hesitated to accept these securities as good collateral. This increase in importance of the interest represented by the securities brings up the question of the relationship borne by the companies to the investor and to the municipality. Mr. Yerkes and those who participated in the discussion were of the opinion that publicity was essential to protect the investor. The municipality should receive, as a *quid pro quo*, a share in the receipts of the street railroad.

The great investment of capital is cited as an argument in favor of two-hundred-year franchises. It is claimed that a proper return upon the investment cannot be obtained in a short period. Street railroad enterprise is subject to much unjust criticism. There should, therefore, be a commission of three business men appointed by the governor of the state for a term of fifteen years. This commission should concern itself with the general supervision of street railways, and the affording of the protection to which railways are legally entitled. This plan gives no control over fares. The commission's functions are to be, on the whole, advisory.

Throughout the paper and the discussion thereon, the point kept in view is that of the self interest of the street car lines. It is significant, however, that there is also a recognition of the fact that street railway enterprise is so bound up with civic needs that regulation is warranted.

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#### AN ERROR IN THE USE OF STATISTICS OF POPULATION.

IN his latest contribution to economic literature<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wright presents statistics of the United States census, from which he concludes that there has been nearly a year's increase in the average duration of human life during the decade 1881-1890. At the same time he finds a large decrease in the number of child workers. According to the census the average age of our people was 24.13 years in 1880 and

<sup>1</sup> *Outlines of Practical Sociology*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1899. 8vo, pp. xxv + 431.

25.11 years in 1890, an apparent increase in average age of nearly one year. Regarding this increase Mr. Wright remarks:

A comparison with the earlier decades would show that this rise of average age of the living population has long been going on. Just what the increase has been in a century cannot be stated, but the rise in the reasonable expectation of human life is one of the triumphs of modern sanitary and medical science.

Mr. Wright also presents the following table, from which he concludes, notwithstanding the incomparability of the data, that there has been a decided decrease of children in gainful occupations:

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN AT WORK AT THE THREE CENSUS YEARS 1870, 1880, AND 1890.

Census years and classification of ages	Males	Females	Total
1870			
Total children 10 to 15 years, inclusive - - -	2,840,200	2,764,169	5,604,369
Number of above at work - - - -	548,064	191,100	739,164
Percentage of above at work - - - -	19.30	6.91	13.19
1880			
Total children 10 to 15 years, inclusive - - -	3,376,114	3,273,369	6,649,483
Number of above at work - - - -	825,187	293,169	1,118,356
Percentage of above at work - - - -	24.44	8.96	16.82
1890			
Total children 10 to 14 years, inclusive - - -	3,574,787	3,458,722	7,033,509
Number of above at work - - - -	400,586	202,427	603,013
Percentage of above at work - - - -	11.21	5.85	8.57

To render the data of 1890 comparable with those of previous decades Mr. Wright estimates that 257,773 should be added, making the number of children from 10 to 15 at work in 1890, 860,786. I venture the suggestion that Mr. Wright has been incautious in his conclusions on these points, and to call attention to factors in the problem which he has failed to consider. The first of these is the fact that at the census of 1890 the question asked by enumerators of population, as appears by the census schedule, was "age nearest birthday," while the schedule of 1880 called for "age last birthday." Thus one-half year of the apparent increase in the average age of our people is fictitious. But admitting a half year's increase in average age, does this prove increased longevity?

The census shows a decreased proportion of children. This would increase the average age of the whole people, even without an increase in the average length of life. Children of fourteen and under constitute over 35 per cent. of our population. Should an epidemic of diphtheria or other disease carry off a large proportion of this class, the average age of the people remaining would be very considerably increased and the increase would not be the result of increased duration of life, but the contrary. A decreased proportion of children to the total population, from whatever cause, would in like manner affect the average age of our people. The proportion has been very sensibly affected by the unprecedented immigration during the decade in question, for of our foreign-born population children form an insignificant proportion, as remarked in the census (*Compendium*, p. 191): "Of all the foreign whites in 1890 less than one tenth were under fifteen years of age." As to the increase of our foreign population Mr. Wright remarks (p. 48):

During the decade from 1881 to 1890 the immigration was unparalleled in amount, reaching a total of nearly 5,250,000, almost twice as great as during the preceding decade and more than twice as great as during any other ten-year period in the country's history. More than one third of the total immigration of this country since 1821 came during the ten years from 1881 to 1890.

While our foreign-born population increased 38 per cent. during this decade, the population of native birth increased less than 23 per cent. Of our foreign-born population children under five constituted less than 1 per cent. and under ten less than 4½ per cent. While of the total population children under five constituted over 12 per cent. and children under ten constituted over 24 per cent. While children classified as under five constituted 13.79 per cent. of the total population in 1880, in 1890 they were but 12.19 per cent. Though our total population increased during the decade over 25 per cent., the increase of those under five years was but from 6,914,576 to 7,634,693 or less than 10½ per cent. Had this class increased in proportion to the increase of the total population, there would be shown above a million more children of this class than the census figures indicate. As one of the causes for the decrease, the census, in remarks accompanying the tables, mentions the decline among native white persons of native extraction as due to the disinclination of native-born mothers of the present generation to rear large families. The effect of this

seems, however, to have been counteracted by the prolificness of mothers of foreign extraction.

After allowing for the effect of foreign immigration, and for every other cause affecting the decline of children, there remains a large number that must be accounted for by a cause that seems not to have occurred to the census officials. This is the change in the census question, referred to above, from "age last birthday" to "age nearest birthday." This makes practically one half year's difference in the age schedule, for at the census of 1880 all children up to their sixth birthday would be included as five years of age, while at the last census those up to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  only would be included. While the data cited by Mr. Wright, therefore, may be held to show an increase of nearly a half year in the average age of our people, this increase in average age does not seem to indicate increased longevity.

The change in the census classification of child workers from 10 to 15 at previous censuses to 10 to 14 at the last census is not explained. This change destroys not only the comparability of the data with those of previous censuses, but it makes any comparison with the data of the manufacturing census or with those of state factory inspectors impossible. There certainly is every reason why the comparability of the data should have been maintained, and no good reason has been given for the change. Whatever may have been the aim, the result is to conceal the facts as to whether there has been an increase or decrease in the number of children in gainful pursuits. The change from 10 to 15 to 10 to 14 makes an apparent change in the classification of one year, but since at one census the age was taken at last birthday, and at the other at nearest birthday, there is in fact a change in classification of practically a year and a half. At the census of 1880 those reported as from 10 to 15 years inclusive really included all child workers up to their sixteenth birthday, while at the last census the number included all up to  $14\frac{1}{2}$  years of age.

Mr. Wright has guessed that there should be added to the number reported in 1890, 257,773, or slightly over 40 per cent., to make a number comparable with the number reported in 1880. He has apparently no more ground for this than for his conclusion that there was, from 1880 to 1890 an increase of nearly a year in the average duration of life.

From the figures given in Mr. Wright's table there appears a very striking increase of child workers from 1870 to 1880, while his estimate

shows a still more striking decrease from 1880 to 1890. The Massachusetts factory inspector reports separately the number of children employed in the factories of that state, from 14 to 16 and those under 14. Of the 9919 employed in 1890, 8263 were from 14 to 16, and but 1656 were under 14. This is a proportion of 5 to 1. In 1891 the proportion shown is 6.6 to 1. If we accept this proportion as at all representative, we have the following problem. If child workers from 14 to 16 outnumber child workers under 14 as 5 or 6 to 1, what proportion would child workers from 14½ to 16 be to those under 14½? If we conclude that the number of the older children are no more than double those under 14½, we should have to add 200, instead of 40 per cent., to the number 603,013, making the total number, in 1890, over 1.8 million, instead of 860,786, as Mr. Wright surmises. This is also but a guess, but it agrees with observation, and also with the recent investigation of the Department of Labor as to the employment of children. It is curious to note that Mr. Wright, in discussing the child-labor problem, makes no reference to this investigation of his own department. This calls to mind that in that report Mr. Wright quoted these same dubious census statistics to discredit the results of the investigation of the Department of Labor, which, if it may be accepted as showing anything whatever, indicates a very decided increase in the employment of children.

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#### THE APPLICATION OF THE ANTI-TRUST LAW.

I TAKE the liberty of calling attention to an error in Mr. Robinson's paper on "Organized Labor and Organized Capital" in this JOURNAL for June 1899. He says (p. 338) of the Sherman anti-trust act :

So broad are the terms of the act just quoted that it has often been pointed out that they would in fact, if strictly interpreted, operate to forbid labor organization. But no attempt has been made to prove that point—for the simple reason that it is assured in advance that, if it was found that the law did forbid such combinations, Congress would promptly amend it.

There seems to be in the writer's mind the impression which Mr. F. J. Stimson expresses in his *Labor in its Relations to Law*, and which ex-Senator Manderson expressed in his recent address before the American Bar Association, that the law has gone very far toward making the industrial classes privileged. General Manderson was a member of the